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REPORT CLASS

COUNTRY: SOUTH VIETNAM

SUBJECT: THIS IS A SITUATION REPORT IN QUANG TRI PROVINCE AS OF

0400 HOURS ON 3 FEBRUARY

ACQUARRD: VIETNM, DANANG (3 FEBRUARY 1968)

SOURCE: THIS IS A SITUATION REPORT ON 3 FEBRUARY PREPARED BY

CAS,

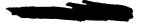
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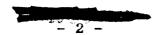
1. ON 3 FEBRUARY QUANG TRI PROVINCE WAS MOVING INTO THE FOURTH DAY OF THE BATTLE FOR THE QUANG TRI LOWLANDS. THE ENEMY, IT APPEARED, EMPLOYED 12 BATTALIONS IN HIS DRIVE TO TAKE OVER TRIEU PHONG, MAI LINH, AND HAI LANG DISTRICTS AND QUANG TRI CITY. OVERT MILITARY OPERATIONS BEGAN IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF 31 JANUARY. HE LOST HIS INITIATIVE AFTER 24 HOURS AND WHETHER HE KNOWS IT OR NOT HE IS NOW ON THE DEFENSIVE.

2. THE ENEMY PROBABLY LOST APPROXIMATELY 1,500 KILLED IN ACTION (KIA) AND 1,000 WIA, OR ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF HIS FORCE.

(MOSTLY NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY (NVA) AND SOME VIET CONG (VC).)

ALLIES HAVE TAKEN ABOUT 63 PRISONERS. IN A THREE-BATTALION ATTACK ON CAM LO DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS ON 1-2 FEBRUZRY THE ENEMY LOST ANOTHER 150 KIA AND 23 PRISONERS OF WAR (POW), AND THESE FIGURES ARE NOT COMPLETE. THE ENEMY STILL HAS THE CAPABILITY TO REINFORCE AND HE STILL CAN NEUTRALIZE SOME ALLIED COMBAT BASES BY





ROCKET AND SHEAK AIR ATTACKS (NOT YET EMPLOYED).

- 3. IF HE EXPECTS TO WIN THE BATTLE FOR QUANG TRI, HE MUST COMMIT THESE FORCES AND HE MUST ACHIEVE BETTER COORDINATION THAN HE HAS DEMONSTRATED SO FAR. PART OF HIS PROBLEM HAS BEEN ALLIED MASTERY OF THE SKIES DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS. THE ENEMY, AFTER SECURING TOEHOLDS ON THE NORTH AND SOUTH EDGES OF THE CITY OF QUANG TRI IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF 31 JANUARY, WAS UNABLE TO REINFORCE THESE UNITS WITH HISRESERVES UNTIL THE NEXT NIGHT.

 THIS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE ALLIES TO BLOCK THE TWO ROUTES THE NVA/VC PLANNED TO USE. FORTUNATELY THE WEATHER WAS FAIR. IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A DIFFERENT STORY HAD PILOTS BEEN GROUNDED.
- 4. ANOTHER FACTOR WHICH MAY HAVE INFLUENCED THE OUTSOME

 OF THIS BATTLE WAS THE ENEMY'S FOOLISHNESS IN SETTING UP HIS

 COMMAND POST SO CLOSE TO QUANG TEI CITY (VICINITY OF YD343515)

 AND ALLIED LUCK INWIPING OUT THIS COMMAND POST. ENEMY KIA IN
 CLUDED A COLONEL AND THREE JUNIOR OFFICERS AND PROBABLY GENERAL

 NAM LONG AND HIS CHIEF OF STAFF. CREDIT FOR THIS COUP BELONGS

 TO THE ARMY OF THE EPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (ARVN) NINTH AIRBORNE

 BATTALIONABND ELEMENTS OF THE ARVN SEVENTH CAVALRY (APC'S).

 THEY CAPTURED THE ENEMY'S COMMUNICATION MACILITY INTACT (RADIO

 DESTROYED). ONE OF THE LAST MESSAGES IN THE RADIO MESSAGE FILE

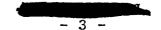
 WAS A REPORT TO HIGHER HEADQUARTERS ANNOUNCING THE DEATH OF GENERAL

 NAM LONG ALONG WITH HIS CHIEF OF STAFF. USING THE ENEMY'S SIGNAL

 OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS, THE AIRBORNE BATTALION COMMANDER, A NORTH

 VIETNAMESE HIMSELF, PERSONALLY CALLED THE ENEMY HIGHER HEAD-





QUARTERS AND ASKED IF IT WERE TRUE THAT THE GENERAL WAS DEAD.

THE HIGHER HEADQUARTERS CAME RIGHT BACK WITH A CONFIRMATION.

THIS STORY SOUNDS FARFETCHED AND THERE ARE STILL MANY DETAILS

MISSING. MAJOR NHAN, THE SECTOR COMMANDER, EXPLAINED MOST OF THESE

DETAILS. A U.S. ARMY AIRWORNE ADVISOR WITH THE NINTH AIRBORNE

BATTALION LATER TOLD AN ALMOST IDENTICAL STORY. THE BODIES OF

THE TWO OFFICERS HAD NOT YET BEEN FOUND, BUT THERE ARE REPORTS

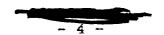
FROM THE VILLAGERS THAT THEY WERE DRAGGED ZWAY TOWARD THACH HAU

HAMLET ON THE NIGHT OF 31 JANUARY. POLICE ARE HOT ON THE TRAIL

OF THESE BODIES AND THE VILLAGERS ALL SEEM TO BE POSITIVE THAT

THEY SAW THIS HAPPEN.

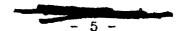
5. THERE IS MUCH SENTIMENT AMONG THE PEOPLE OF QUANG TRI
CITY AGAINST THE NVA AND AGAINST ANY FORM OF COALITION WITH THE
COMMUNISTS. ONE GROUP, MOSTLY CATHOLICS AND MEMBERS OF THE
REVOLUTIONARY DAI VIET PARTY (RDVP), APPARENTLY WOULD PREFER AN
INDEPENDENT ANTI-COMMUNIST CENTRAL VIETNAM REPUBLIC COMPOSED OF
QUANG TRI, THUA THIEN AND QUANG NAM PROVINCES IF SAIGON OPTS FOR
THE COALITION COURSE OF ACTION. OBVIOUSLY THESE PEOPLE ARE NOT
REALISTS BUT THE SENTIMENT IS SIGNIFUCANT. ON THE AFTERNOON OF
1 FEBRUARY THE PROVINCE CHIEF HELD A VICTORY PARADE IN TOWN AND
THE RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE WAS ELECTIC. THEY THREW FLOWERS, FOOD
AND CIGARETTES TO THE PASSING SOLDIERS AND THERE WERE SPONTANEOUS
SMILES, TEARS AND CHEERING WHICH IS SURPRISING FROM A PEOPLE



INURED TO WAR.

- 6. SENATOR HOANG XUAN TUU, RDVP MEMBER, HAS BEEN IN TOWN
 THROUGH ALL OF THIS AND HAS BEEN CHEERFUL AND OPTIMISTIC, AT LEAST
 OUTWARDLY. HE HAS BEEN VERY MUCH IN EVIDENCE DURING THE DAYLIGHT
 HOURS, VISITING THE MINED HAMLET OF TRI BUU AND THE HTHOUSANDS
 OF DISPLACED PERSONS CAMPING IN THE SCHOOLS AROUND TOWN. HE HAS
 NOT BEEN ESCORTED WITH AN OBVIOUS BODYGUARD.
- 7. SO FAR THE BUDDHISTS HAVE NOT RESPONDED TO THE STORY WHICH IS CIRCULATING IN QUANG TRI THAT THE MILITANT AN QUANG BUDDHISTS IN SAIGON HAVE DEFECTED TO THE NATIONAL FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF SOUTH VIETNAM (NFLSV). THERE WAS ARRUMOR THAT SOME RALLYING WAS IN PROCESS AT THE BUDDHIST HIGH SCHOOL BUT A CHECK REVEALED NO EVIDENCE OF THIS.
- 8. DURING THE IATE AFTERNOON OF 1 FEBRUARY THE COMBINED ACTION PLATOON (CAP) AND PROVINCIAL RECONNAISSANCE UNIT (PRU) REPORTED THAT THE ENEMY WAS HOLDING A VICTORY CELEBRATION IN THE EASTERN EDGE OF THUONG XA HAMLET (YD375497), MAI LINH DISTRICT, WHICH HAS BEEN UNDER CONTEST BY THE VC AND THE ALLIES FOR SOME WEEKS. ALLIED ARTILLERY PROMPTLY PLACED A 24 GUN TIME ON TARGET BARRAGE ON TOP OF THE CELEBRATION WITH UNKNOWN RESULTS.
- 9. THE PROVINCE CHIEF, LIETENANT COLONEL NGUYEN AM, WAS QUITE ASSERTIVE BY LATE AFTERNOON, 2 FEBRUARY. HE TOOK CHARGE OF THE DEFENSIVE ARRANGEMENTS AROUND THE TOWN AND "BOLDLY" GAVE UP THE POLICE FIELD FORCE PLATOON GUARDING HIS UNOCCUPIED RESIDENCE. THE PLATOON WAS NEEDED TO BOLSTER ONE COMPANY OF THE U.S. FIRST AIR CAVALRY WRICH WAS OBTAINED TO FILL THE GAP LEFT WHEN THE



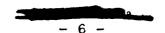


ARVN AIRBORNE BATTALION MOVED TO HUE. DURING THE FIRST TWO DAYS OF THE FIGHTING HOWEVER, CHIEF AM WAS A VEGETABLE. THE VIETNAMESE SECTOR STAFF IS A FAIRLY GOOD ONE, BUT IT TENDS TO FALL APART WHEN OPERATIONS DO NOT CONFORM TO CLASSIC PATTERNS. WITH THE FIVE, AND NOW SIX, AIR CAVALRY COMPANIES TO WORK WITH, CONVENTIONAL TACTICS HAVE TO BE SET ASIDE.

REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT AND REFUGEES

- DEVELOPMENT (RD) AREA MOSTLY INTRIEU PHONG DISTRICT. THE ALLIES ARE GOING TO BE FORCED TO GO IN AND ROOT OUT THESE FORCES, WHICH MAY WRECK HAVOC ON THE HAMLETS IN THE PROCESS. IN ADDITION, THE ALLIES DO NOT HAVE THE TROOPS TO MAKE A THOROUGH CORDON AROUND THE AREA. A PSYOPS CAMPAIGN WILL BE TRIED LATER TODAY, BUT THIS IS AIMED MOSTLY AT CALMING THE NERVES OF THE PEOPLE. THEY SEEM TO BE CONFUSED BY ALL THAT HAS HAPPENED IN THE PAST 72 HOURS AND THE ENEMY INTER IS PROPAGANDIZING TO WIN THEM.
- 11. WHEN THE ENEMY FINALLY CUTS OUT, IT IS HOPED HE DOES NOT TRY TO TAKE HOSTAGES WITH HIM. HE MAY KILL HAMLET AND VILLAGE CHIEFS WHOLESALE AND HE MAY EVACUATE EVERY YOUTH IN SIGHT. ANY OR ALL OF THESE COURSES OF ACTION WOULD HURT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE CAUSE FOR A LONG TIME TO COME.
- 12. ALTHOUGH QUANG TRI CITY IS FULL OF REFUGEES, THERE WILL NO DOUBT BE MORE IF THE ALLIES HAVE TO FIGHT THEIR WAY THROUGH THE RD AREA. ALREADY THERE ARE AREA ABOUT 300 CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN THE HOSPITAL FROM THE FIGHTING AROUND TOWN. MANY MORE CAN BE EXPECTED AS THE ALLIES PUSH THEIR WAY OUTWARD.

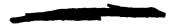




OUTLOOK

- THAN COULD BE EXPECTED AND AS THE SITUATION IMPROVES THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL MACHINERY IS BEINGREORGANIZED TO PUSH AHEAD WITH PROVINCE PROGRAMS. THE ENEMY HAS LOST THIS ROUND. HE MAY TRY AGAIN BUT HE NEEDS A NEW PLAN AND LOTS OF RESUPPLY AND REINFORCEMENTS. ANOTHER MAJOR EFFORT PROBABLY WILL NOT OCCUR EFFORE ABOUT 7 FEBRUARY AND IF THE ALLIES MAKE THE MOST OF THE COUNTERSWEEPS, THIS EFFORT COULD BE DELAYED FOR MONTHS. IF THE ENEMY EMPLOYES AIR, HOWEVER, THE SITUATION COULD BE REVERSED. (COMMENT: THE VC PROPAGANIZED THAT IT HAD BEEN SUPPLIED WITH AIRCRAFT, WHICH WOULD BE USED ONLY IN AN EXTREME SITUATION, A FEW MONTHS AGO, ACCORDING TO INFORMANTS OF AN OFFICIAL VIETNAMESE SECURITY SERVICE.) KHE SANH IS A SEPARATE PROBLEM THE ENEMY SEEMS TO BE GATHERING HIS STRENGTH FOR A MAJOR PUSH AGAINST WELLOW ENTRENCHED ALLIED FORCES THERE.
- 41. FIELD DISSEM: STATE USMACV CORDS III MAF 7TH AF USARV COMNAVFORV USAID DIR/JUSPAO (MR. ZORTHIAN ONLY) CINCPAC ARPAC PACAF

REPORT CLASS



GROUP I

END OF MESSAGE